

WILLIAM BARBER.

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MAY 3, 1898.—Laid on the table and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. DAYTON, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, submitted the following

ADVERSE REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 947.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, having fully considered the bill (H. R. 947) "For the relief of William Barber, late of United States Navy," report and recommend that said bill do not pass.

This applicant, Barber, it is true, has a good record in the aggregate of service in the Navy, having enlisted February 16, 1865; served three years, to February 15, 1868, and then discharged; reenlisted February 22, 1868, for three years; served until March 1, 1870, when he deserted.

The facts simply are that he went ashore under leave, spent the time in a prolonged drunk, overstayed his leave, and, as he says, was then ashamed to go back. His long period of service speaks strongly for mercy, but while this is so, if the discipline of the Navy is to be maintained, men must not by Congress be lightly relieved from the consequence of their own misconduct. To grant relief in this case would establish a precedent that would come up with force and bad effect in many other cases where relief is sought upon substantially the same grounds.